



Inventory 44, Seeds and Plants Imported.

PLATE IV.

FRUITS OF THE JAPANESE APRICOT, *PRUNUS MUME* SIEB. AND ZUCC., S. P. I. No. 28685. (SEE S. P. I. No. 41061.)

These exceedingly sour fruits, which resemble small greenish or yellow apricots and when perfectly ripe remind one of the American plum in flavor, are eaten in great quantities in Japan in the form of pickles and are said to have formed a portion of the army ration of the Japanese troops during the Russo-Japanese war, their effect being to quench the thirst. The fruits are pickled in brine with the leaves of the oil plant (*Perilla arguta*), which give them a reddish color and an aromatic taste. This apricot is the so-called "flowering plum," or "mume," of Japanese literature, and its extremely picturesque flowering branches are even more common on Japanese screens than are those of the famous flowering cherries. It is a greater favorite among Japanese poets than the cherry. It flowers so early that it is often caught by late snows and frost, and as few insects are flying at that time, it may need hand pollination. (Photographed June 22, 1915, from fruits sent from the Chico Field Station; natural size; P13508FS.)